

## Letter and enclosure from Eliza Symonds Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, June 2, 1875, with transcript

Copy of Letter from Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell to her son, Alexander Graham Bell June 2d, 75 Brantford, Ont., Canada Home, June 2d, 75 (Prof. A. Graham Bell, 292 Essex Street, Salem, Mass. U. S.) My dear Aleck,

Your letter of May the 24th, arrived on Friday, together with one from Mary. I was busy writing to her on Sunday, so did not get one prepared for you. We are glad to find that all is going well with you, and especially so at the improved state of your health. That after all, is the principal thing. I do not feel competent to remark on your present engagements, but trust they will turn out as you desire, and prove sufficiently remunerative. I believe there is to be an automaton speaker in the House of Commons one of these days, who will spout out in any language, according to the hole matter is telegraphed into! What will be transmitted next by means of electricity! Take care that your brains don't go off without your being aware of it!! Mary and her Sisters gladly accept our proposal. Mr. Anderson has their affairs in hand, and recommends letting the house for the present, this not being a good time for selling. As soon as it is let, they will sell the furniture and come over. The girls have of their own 540 Pounds in the savings' Bank, and 150 of their Father's, besides the house and furniture. The price of that added to the above, and put out to interest here, will keep them in clothes and pocket money. Uncle David and Aunt Ellen are just now at Toronto with Charlie, trying to find him something better to do than flirting. The younger of the two of the Miss Reids, is said to be dreadfully in love with him. Your cousins all seem to have beaus but whether serious ones or not, I don't know. Papa finishes at the Ladies' College this week. Have not seen Carrie for a fortnight. I am just about writing to her Mother.

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We expect Mrs. Lander about Monday next, she will probably stay for a 2 week. We have told many to bring out a Scotch servant for us, if they can find a suitable one.

(Monday) There is nothing more to add in the way of information, except a farmer's picnic to be held at T. Wye's place today, under a doubtful sky, at which two members of Parliament are to be present. Fond love from your Papa and, Your affectionate Mother, E. G. Bell

### **THE NOVEMBER METEORS.**

( *From the New York Times .* )

The remarkable showers of meteors in the year 1799, and its recurrence in the years 1833 to 1839, gave rise to the theory that their appearance was no accident, but that they might be expected regularly each thirty-fourth year, and for the four or five years immediately succeeding. Accordingly a third shower was predicted for 1867, and for the years immediately following it. True to the prediction there did occur a most remarkable display of meteors in 1867, and in every November since then there has been a like phenomenon, except that the number of shooting stars has each year decreased considerably. Last night and one preceding were those upon which this periodic shower was to be looked for, and the appointment was fully kept. It is true that 200,000 stars did not flash through the sky in seven hours, as was said to have been the case in 1833. And neither did the meteors "fall as thickly as snow flakes," as one observer described their appearance in 1867. But it must be remembered that the theory only calls for a number decreasing with each year succeeding 1867, and that requirement was amply satisfied. From midnight until early dawn, on both Thursday and Friday nights, there were scarcely any ten consecutive minutes in which the heavens were not crossed by a gleam of phosphorescent light, and occasionally several meteors might be seen at once. And, as an astronomer would have expected, most of the meteors flashed out from the vicinity of *Gamma Leonis*. In short, without wishing to magnify in the least the number of meteors that were visible,

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there were abundantly enough to show that they could not be the sporadic or accidental shooting stars of any casual evening, but were really the or after-thought, so to speak, of the magnificent periodical display of 1867, which, as the period is thought to be 34 years, cannot be again expected before 1901 So remarkable a phenomenon as this has of course called forth many theories as to its explanation. One, for instance, is that the earth at each revolution in its orbit plunges more or less deeply into a ring of debris which circulates about the sun. This theory demands a belief in the existence of an indenite, or rather of an infinite, number of small heavenly bodies, technically called bolides, that wander aimlessly through space in an orbit which, if it exists at all, is an irregular one. Another theory is that this shower of meteors is caused by the passage of the earth through cometic matter, the particular comet in question being that known as Biela's. And it is certain that this hypothesis is supported by many reasons which are said to be astronomically strong, but which are also, to an unscientific mind, at least, quite as bewildering as convincing. Of theories unscientific the number is legion. One of them is that these meteors are merely volcanic stones, which, having been thrown indefinitely upward by an eruption, at last return to the earth by force of gravity. And another theory differs from the last only in placing the volcanoes on the moon, rather than on the earth. But however the existence of these meteors is explained, there is another thing about them which troubles the popular mind. Astronomers say that the luminous path which the shooting stars make in the sky is about twenty-seven miles long, and terminates about fifty-five miles from the earth's surface. But what becomes of the stars after they have flashed across the space thus marked out for them? As to this there is but one accepted theory; they are entirely consumed by their swift passage through the atmosphere, and are thus either entirely volatilized, or else they descend to the earth

According to the *Iron Age* , a wedge or plate of iron has been found imbedded in the masonry of the great pyramid in Egypt, the indications being that it must have been wrought in the age of Cheops, placed by some authorities as far back as 5,400 years ago. This makes the use of iron about 2,500 years more ancient than it has been supposed

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to be, and affords opportunity for explaining the cutting of the sharp and well-defined hieroglyphics on porphyry, granite, and other hard stones employed in the construction of Egyptian pyramids, temples, and tombs. How these could have been cut before the age of iron has been a puzzling question to many. Further investigation may show iron to have been in use 6,000 years ago.